

COLLABORATION: FOCUS CONVERSATION

 Village of Eden, MS

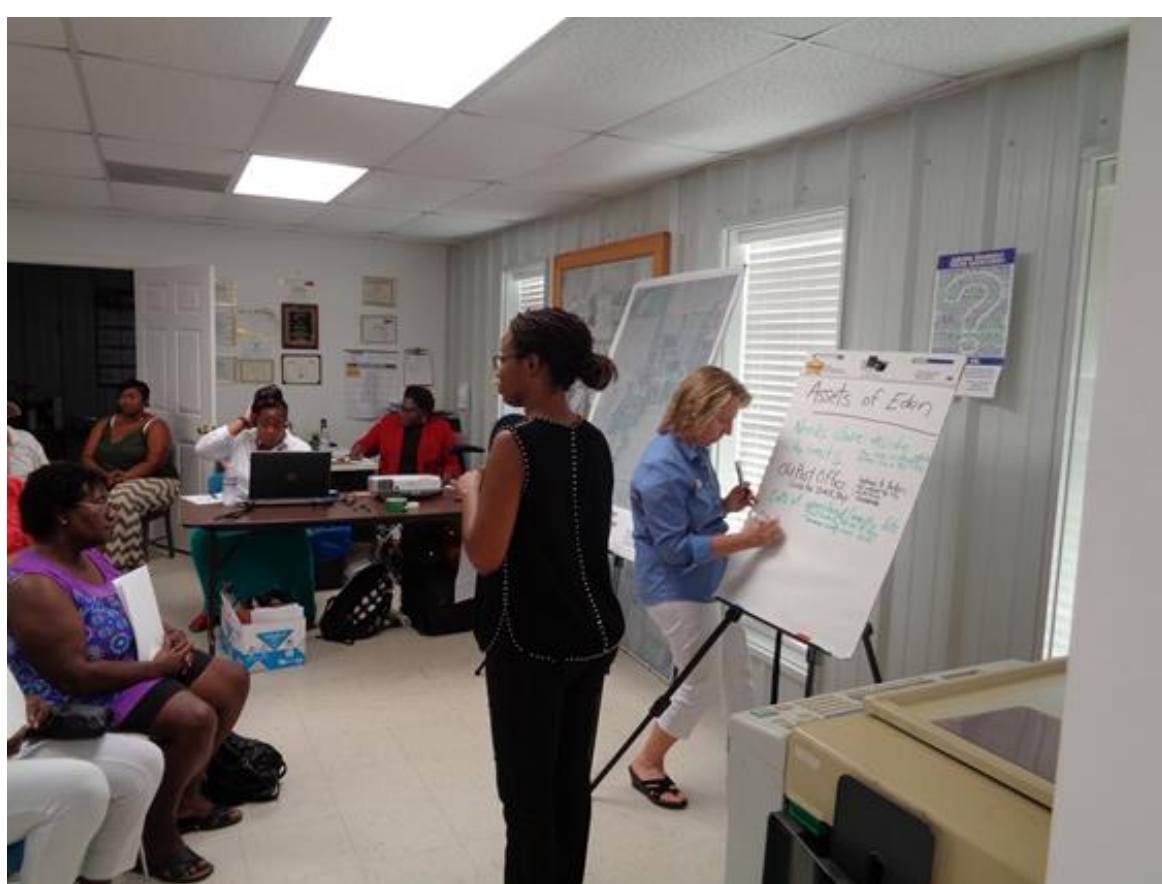
BACKGROUND

THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROVIDED ASSISTANCE TO HELP THE VILLAGE OF EDEN LEVERAGE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO CREATE AN INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CITIZENS.

On September 15, 2016, the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) hosted a Focus Conversation Community Meeting with the citizens of the Village of Eden. The purpose of the meeting was to assist the community with establishing a vision for the Village of Eden.

In preparation, OCE completed a site visit. Aerial maps were created to highlight homes, buildings, land use, zoning, natural features and streets.

Nearly thirty residents, property owners and stakeholders, including the mayor and two aldermen from Eden and surrounding communities were in attendance.



DEMOGRAPHICS

The population was 126 at the time of the 2000 census. The racial makeup of the village was 57.94% White and 42.06% African American. There were 30.6% of families and 35.7% of the population living below the poverty line.

In the 2010, the US Census' population estimates was 103. (NO ADDITIONAL DATA)



COLLABORATION TIMELINE



DATE	ACTIVITY
2016	Communications with Mayor Hogan
	Site visit
08/26/2016	Save-the-date cards mailed
09/02/2016	Meeting notice mailed
09/15/2016	Community Meeting
09/20/2016	Report

CURRENT ASSETS

Community members listed the following as (useable) assets of Eden:

EXISTING BUILDINGS

Old Post Office

- Snack Bar

Concerns: No parking, property not city owned

Store (Located on Hwy 49)

Concerns: Outside of city limits ; Owners in Texas

Church

- Gallagher's Mission: Use as a multi-purpose building

OPEN LAND

- Six-acre park
- Two community members own vacant lots

WATER BODIES

- Big Lake, Hillside, Yazoo River and Wolf Lake
- Catch fish for restaurants or festival

NAME OF "EDEN"

Coin the name: Brand Name: Let's get Back to Eden

LANDMARKS

- 3 entryways into the city (Money Sunk, Eden Lane and Main St.)
- Potential Amtrak

CREATING REVENUE

Community members listed the following as ideas for creating revenue:

Festival

- Local Musicians/Artist: James "Son" Thomas
- Corn Festival**

Souvenir shop

- Brand the "Village of Eden"

Farmers Market

Historical Cookbook

- Title: Recipes from Heaven – Discussed selling in the Yazoo City area boutiques
- Community members provide recipes

Annex

Tire Shop

- Fix Flats for farmers (Farm equipment)

Walk-A-Thon/Bike-A-Thon

Rent rooms to international travelers

TO DO:

1. Contest
 - a. Beautify yards (Yard of the month)
2. Signs
 - a. Place attractive signs on Hwy 49 to grab drivers attention
3. Morning Star Baptist Church (120+ Years)
 - a. Place on historical register
4. Create memorial for Clifton Jones
5. Feature train caboose in park to highlight Yellow Dog Railroad

NEXT STEPS:

1. Decide what project to focus on first
2. Make a list of available funding for ideas listed under "Creating Revenue"
3. Explore "Festival" ideas
4. Clear underbrush from six-acre of land
5. Make sure community is working together

Participants were divided into four groups. They were given aerial maps of Eden to visualize, identify, and draw locations for potential areas of development, redevelopment and improvements. Ideas were plotted on a large aerial map.

